

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 11, with the following amended paragraph:

This application is related to U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/989,911, _____ entitled "Time-Division Multiplexed Link For Use In A Service Area Network," filed November 19, 2001 ~~on the same day as the current application under Attorney Docket No. 20206-136.~~

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 8, with the following amended paragraph:

In particular, the lane rotation takes advantage of the transmission of the TS1 and TS2 ordered sets. A number of these ordered sets are transmitted on the lanes 126 at startup and upon error handling, and the demultiplexer control 142 utilizes the control symbol (comma) and associate lane identifier to align the lanes correctly. In fact, upon startup, the demultiplexer control 142 can initially begin assigning bits to particular lanes without concern for the lane ID, and the finite state machine will in due course rotate the lane assignments to the correct lanes, allowing the link 14 to reach the link up state.